TRANSCRIPT—MARCELL PROCTOR

Interviewee: Marcell Proctor

Interviewer: Pat Fitzpatrick

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Pat Fitzpatrick: This is Pat Fitzpatrick. I'm with Marcell Proctor and his wife, Kathleen?

Kathryn Proctor: Kathryn.

PF: Kathryn. I'm sorry. And Marcell is going to tell us about his growing up on what we call South Slope, in the Asheville area. And he will tell us about his family and his background, and then we'll branch off into anything he wants to talk about.

Marcell Proctor: All right. You spelled my name, so I don't have to do that. I was born on Fagg Street and the street is within the Redline thing and therefore all that was destroyed. But, my family, there was 12 children and I'm number 7, the lucky one. And, well, let's see. All of us was normal children and the neighborhood we lived in was--

PF: What were the names of your parents?

MP: Oh, my mother's name was Lillian Landrum, that's her maiden name. My father's name was Jessie James Proctor, and they come from South Carolina, Greensville. Well, they started in Anderson with my great-great grandparents. And they moved north until

they got to Asheville. That's where they originally came from. Well, they did not originally come from there. They originally come from Charleston, because that's where the Proctor name is. And my great-great grandparents come over on one of those slave ships in the Charleston Harbor. And from there, I think it was 1835, one of them was born but that was way before slavery was over, and they still live there. It's a little place they call

PF: Gosh. Could you spell that?

MP: Oh, I have no idea.

KP: I think it's P-e-e-b-e-l-y.

PF: Okay.

MP: Yeah. And should I tell you about my grandparents?

PF: Sure. Sure, I find it very interesting. Yeah. Gosh, I haven't met anybody that knows that far back. I don't.

MP: Well, I can just keep going back. My great-great grandfather was named William Proctor. Now, apparently the folks who owned him was Proctors, and my great-great grandmother was Annie Proctor. And I can talk about my uncles, and talk about my uncles and my daddy's brothers, and it was a family of about maybe 8 or 10 of them.

PF: Now was this passed down to you through family or have you done research on it?

MP: Yeah, because they talked about it. And I know their names and pretty much how old they were. The name William was passed on down through the family, through the

children and the grandchildren and the great grandchildren, because one of my brother's name is William. And I guess I'll get out of Charleston and get back up to North Carolina. But we was just normal children that lived in a neighborhood, before red-lining, that was integrated. And that was Fagg Street.

PF: And that had always been integrated, as far as you know?

MP: When my parents come from South Carolina, they was 16 or 17 years old, and they come to Asheville on a bicycle, because they ran away from home.

PF: So all of you children were born here in Asheville?

MP: All of my brothers and sisters was born in Asheville. And my mother was the oldest of about so many, 8 or 10 in her family. Now they was Landrums and by her being the oldest one, when she left, the siblings started coming to Asheville and then World War I showed up. And my daddy's oldest brother and his youngest brother--because he was the youngest but it was girls in between--they went to World War I from the Buncombe County induction right here. They didn't go back to South Carolina, they went to World War I from Asheville, and come back to Asheville, when they got out of the Army in 1917, 1918. The war was on two or three years but they got in in 1919 and they come back. Well, when they went to World War I they went to France. Gay Paree. And the old saying is once you leave the farm and you go to Paris, you can't come back to that farm. And when you come back, when they come back to Asheville, they went to Cleveland, Ohio. They had children and they're still there. My cousins, we'd be first cousins, they're still there. All of them's almost dead now because they were older than me. But they still live there, the family still live there. One of them come down here about two or three

months ago. So on that side, we're still going because there's a lot of young ones. And we supposed to have a big family reunion, when, July or something? In Virginia?

KP: In July.

MP: In July. Toano, Virginia.

KP: T-o-a-n-o.

MP: One of those Indian names. We're trying to put all that together. But see, I am now the oldest one, and my brothers and sisters. There's only three of us left out of 12 and I'm the oldest of them, the ones that's living. And they live here in Asheville. And the old folks, we used to put all the family reunion thing together and now the young people is doing it.

[Pause to discuss transcription of Proctor genealogy.]

MP: So whatever else happened?

PF: Yeah, things that you did. They always want to know what you did, where you went.

MP: Well, I stayed in Asheville till I was 18.

PF: But when you were a child, they want a picture of what life was like.

MP: Oh. Oh. I was a paper boy. You know, the paper boy go everywhere. In that Southside community, I knew the community like I know my hand, and I could have drove through it and go through it and I still remember where everybody else lived. And it was the biggest community in Asheville. There was more people lived there than it was in any other part of Asheville. Well, they had their little hamlets but we outnumbered

every community. And it's the industrial side of town. And the thing about that is that I remember them old people's names because I was a paper boy. They had to pay me on Saturday. They'd let me in their house and gave me some piece of cake and some lemonade or something and all that. And that was Southside. That was from Valley Road all the way down to Depot, where the train station was at. Because that was a little village down there.

PF: And what road did you say, the first, Galley?

MP: Oh, Valley.

PF: Oh, Valley. Yes. Okay.

MP: Valley Road--or Valley Street. And from there all the way down and it was two major streets. There was Southside and Depot. And a huge community around there.

KP: What about Lyman Hollow?

MP: Oh, yeah. Well, if I get to Lyman Hollow, that's where Fagg Street was at, it was in Lyman Hollow. And I've got maps that show you the house and all that. Well, that was a little community of maybe 8 to maybe 20 houses, and it was up in a hollow. That's what everybody called it. And it was integrated. When my parents come from Greensville--Well, first my daddy's oldest sister come to Asheville, looking for work. Her and her husband. And that was the opening for my father to come when he left and when him and my mother escaped [laughing]. They didn't really escape, they left. They just come down some stairs, I guess. I don't know. But when they got to Asheville, they moved in the same house that his sister lived in. And that one house, and it's 28 Fagg Street, we lived

there forever until everybody died out, except, you know, like I'm saying, there's only a couple of us here going, living around here. But that was the beginning of this crowd, my brothers and sisters. And then from there, we worked all through the community, doing different things. See, I'm getting off of one onto the other.

PF: That's all right.

MP: But the Fagg Street and Lyman Hollow was basically the same street. And Charlie English lived in the street. And he was a, had a family, you know, and there was other ones that lived on the street. And then some lived on the street below. There was two little streets in there right together.

PF: Now was this unusual at that time, that there were integrated neighborhoods?

MP: No, it was not unusual. You see, who made it unusual was the red-lining.

PF: Now explain red-lining for the purpose of here.

MP: Red-lining was to come in the city and to clean up the blight areas that they called. Well, in the red-lining, that's the only--well, the little community, the integrated community that they come in and tore the white folks' houses down and tore our houses down, too. And that's the only place that happened in the State of North Carolina. Because there was a red-line out on Brevard Road--no, not Brevard Road--yeah, Brevard Road. And they red-lined it but they never tore it down. But red-lining was to not loan anybody of color any money. The FHA told the folks, "If you build any houses for blacks, you cannot borrow the money from the government." See, the government separated us. And once we got separated, well, we never come back together. I mean, not

really. But there was a time in Asheville and across America that there was all kinds of integrated communities, and especially in Asheville. Now, when my parents first got there--I'm back on track now--Miss Bates that lived in Lyman Hollow, up in the corner of the neighborhood, little old branch come down there, but you just kind of go up in the corner, you could make a circle and come back. Well, she had a cow, or two cows. And she sold milk to everybody in the community. And sweet milk was what we called that stuff you buy in the stores. Well, you know, we never had sweet milk. We had buttermilk, the best kind, and cornbread. And that was a snack when you come out of school, that's what you had until your mama had dinner for you. And it was so much so that the grandmothers, they come up from South Carolina, the grandfathers some of them died, and they brought the old people up, and they lived in that community. So more old people, there were a lot of old people, everybody had a grandmother. And they would cook the cornbread in them wooden stoves with that old warmer at the top for the children in the community, when we come from school. If you didn't have none, well, the large family that I come from, and I was way down the line, I couldn't run as fast as the rest of them, so they'd go on and they'd get the cornbread. And I'd take my bowl and go across the street or go over to my grandmother's house or anybody that I could go over there with my bowl and ask them could I borrow some cornbread till my mama cooked. What I really didn't understand, that this is what all that was for, that everybody, whether they had children or not, they cooked the cornbread and the grandmothers was always home. It was a safe community. And you know what, I never heard the name "nigger" called in that community. We were friends with the people. They had somebody die, whenever it was somebody sick, the community come around. I mean, they was like that

[motioning]. And I thought that the rest of the world was that way. When I left at 18 and got to New York, it was a different world for me for a while. I mean it was really a different world. But I'm glad I left Asheville, because I got a chance to learn all kinds of things every place I went. I won't call myself a world traveler but I know a lot of stuff about all kind of things. So, as I got older, she liked Asheville. She thought it was swishy with all these mountains. Well, before I left to go from Asheville, I thought the rest of the world was just like it was around here, the mountains and all that. But when I got on that train down to the depot and got down east, because that's the first time I had been down east, because you didn't leave back then and go nowhere. You just stayed around town. Well, I got to Penn Station the next morning and my sisters and cousins met me in New York. I'm looking at all these beautiful buildings. I didn't know if I liked it or not, but to tell the truth, I don't like big cities. To live in a big city is like is, you know, not for me. I'm a small-city boy. But then I lived there for quite a while. I stayed in the north for quite a while, 40 years. 40 years, until she decided we maybe should come back here. But now this was always home. When you get old, you don't think about dying, but people like to go back where they was born.

PF: And did you visit in the interim? You visited back and forth?

MP: I was always back home. I come back and forth. The old people--well, one of the bad things that happened to the old people was the red-lining. They were not able to understand all what was going on. And these people lied to them in such a way. "We're going tear your house down, we're going to build you a new one and you can just live in that one." And that was the biggest lie they ever told. And some of those old people went to their grave because they had to go and live wherever they could live. They come in

with the bulldozers and pushed people's houses down and told them you all got to get out of here. Furniture and all is in them and they pushed them down. That's what happened in Asheville. It happened in other places, too, but that's what happened in Asheville.

PF: Other than South Slope and Stumptown, were there other lack communities where that happened in Asheville?

MP: It happened in all the communities that were red-lined. Southside was the biggest community.

PF: Besides Southside and Stumptown, were there other black communities that were red-lined? I mean, I don't know where they are, that's the thing. What other ones where there at that time? Was Shiloh part of that at that time?

MP: Yes, it was.

PF: Areas of Shiloh were--because the highway goes through.

MP: Shiloh was red-lined and Kenilworth. It was red-lined.

PF: Oh, yes.

MP: There's a community, Ridge Street.

PF: Ridge Street?

KP: East End.

MP: East End. Yeah, Ridge Street. And you see, that's where the high school was at, East End. So that community [thinking]--there was one, two, three, four, five communities.

And out of those communities Southside was the largest one. Voting--oh, that's another thing. The lady that sold the buttermilk to the community, when my parents got to Asheville, Miss Bates come over and asked them was they registered to vote. And that was in 1917, 1916. Yeah, 1916 and 1915. And she got them registered to vote. They was young people and she got them registered to vote. And she must have been a Republican because they was Republicans. And in South Carolina, black people couldn't vote in South Carolina. Nowhere could they vote in South Carolina. So that was something new to them. And they voted Republican until Roosevelt got in there and then they turned to be Democrats. So by them being Democrats, the rest of their children was Democrats until we started to understand that it's one party. It ain't two parties, just one. Now, maybe I'm getting off too far on that.

PF: No. What other things did you do as a child in that are, you know, your boundaries. Did you have any boundaries, per se?

MP: No, no, no. In that community there was no boundaries.

PF: Well, I meant as far as just your natural--you didn't go here, you didn't--I don't mean that they were imposed on you.

MP: There were places that we didn't go. But in the community, in the Southside community, you could go anywhere you want to, because the men, they worked on the railroad and they worked at the tannery. The buildings are still down there on the river. There was a huge tan--let's see. It was a tannery where you bring hides in from everywhere, and scrape the hair off of them and make it, it turns into leather at some point. But that's where, basically, my father worked for about 60 years. He worked on the

railroad, that was his first job, then after he got into the tannery and he stayed there 55 or 60 years. So people that worked there, everybody knew everybody's children. Because the old saying about the Proctors, "If you've seen one you've seen them all.” And that's pretty much true. You could tell people in the community. Well, the boundaries. We didn't have too many boundaries down in that area. Boundaries.

KP: What about downtown?

MP: Oh, the boundaries--now we called it uptown, because that's the highest hill around, if you went over there. We had boundaries. We had Eagle Street and that was our so-called uptown. And it was all kind of businesses, all kind of everything. We had pretty much--we had everything that we needed to do. We had the library there in the YMI. We had basketball teams. The school had all kind of activities. But you could go in the downtown area and it wasn't a boundary. But we were not encouraged--now if you had to go shopping and buy school clothes in Sears Roebuck and all them kind of places, all that stuff was downtown. Well, we called it uptown. But, there were times at night, especially on the weekend, that it was not so safe to be in downtown. And I say, Asheville being a tourist city, people come here from everywhere. But it was some of the locals from these surrounding counties that would come in and do what I see them doing right now, put them big flags up in their truck and ride around like, you know. And that was probably bad news for the tourists, because they come from New York, California, Philadelphia, Detroit, and maybe they wasn't so used to seeing all of that. And they do the same thing now. And these are the outlying crackers, the Donald Trump crowd. So that has been--

PF: Thank you for not assuming I was a Trump person.

MP: Oh, no, no, no. Well, if you was a Trump person--

PF: I wouldn't be sitting here, probably.

MP: No, you see, being a Trump person, there is a real reason for people being a Trump person.

PF: Well, there is. I understand that, but my Lord. At this point?

MP: No, no, no.

PF: Convince me.

MP: It ain't hard if you believe the truth. That permanent underclass that come here to America from England, France and other places, Scottish, all the islands, they was a permanent underclass when they come down to the upper class of white folks who owned everything. And there is still a permanent underclass. But after, say, 100 years or so they kind of got into politics. And they are still the underclass. The Tea Party is that poor boy from Louisiana and all down through Mississippi and all of that. And they managed to get them an Andrew Jackson for them, that's what Andrew Jackson was about and he was a Democrat. They call Trump their savior. Well, but they always got for their votes, people say, "Wait a minute. You ain't supposed to get paid for voting", but everybody gets paid for voting but us, you know. See, we vote and we don't ever get nothing. So that permanent underclass of whites, they got a little bit. And since Trump and a few more white people got in there-- Well, when Obama got there, they thought that was the end of their worries. And they pretty much were because the politicians made statements "We ain't giving them nothing. They ain't going to get no Social Security, they ain't going to

get nothing that they've been getting.” And then they said, "We ain't having nothing to do with no more politicians.” And that's how Trump got in there.

PF: Yeah, but now that they see he's not going to produce, I mean, actually--

MP: The thing is, he lied his ass off.

PF: He did, but can they not see it now?

MP: Well, but you see the thing is, Trump was a New York slickster and he lies. Everything he says is a lie. He's a lie. He was born to lie. His daddy was a liar. They lived in Queens. When I was there, I knew about the Trumps because they built a lot of places in the suburbs of New York. And the things they was getting sued by, his daddy was worse than he is. Because Maddie's father worked for him. He was a foreman on building all those single-family houses for $10,000. It was the Trumps that did that. Donald's daddy. So Donald come with a history. And the average, I think the average white folks thought he come to save them. He come to get what he could get. And they got mad. They got mad at all the other politicians and I don't blame the permanent underclass from getting mad at the rest of the politicians.

PF: I understand that part. It's just that once they see that this guy has feet of clay, so to speak--

MP: You want to believe in something. These are the only people that they got involved in that and Trump's still got them believing that he can take it back to 1949 and make the country back to what it was in '49. Well, you can't take it back. Life goes that way [motioning]. It don't go back that way. And all the rigamarole and all this stuff, the Tea

Party, and now they're calling it the Freedom Party, but it's the same party. It is the Andrew Jackson party. And the thing about that is, they are now trapped in it. And all the things that Obama put out there, they are systematically undoing it, not knowing that you're undoing yourself. So I do understand why they act the way they act.

PF: I understand that part, but the part now, okay. How much more do they need to see that this isn't the person that they thought he was? I'll have to ask Zoe if we can get into all this politics. It's part of life, it's part of history.

MP: All right. Well, it's a part of history. And it should go way all over this.

PF: It is all this.

MP: And the thing about that is, the young people need to know these things so they don't make the same mistakes, because the mistake is to believe a carnival barker. This boy was the head of a three-ring circus. And this is probably the first time, this is the second time. Andrew Jackson did pretty much the same thing. So for one to read the Andrew Jackson history, you're actually reading who Trump is. And the folks didn't catch up with that because the so-called middle class of whites and blacks, they thought Trump was funny, that this is a joke, that he'll never win. I never thought he would win either, until Hillary started running with no damn program. She added nothing, and she was a Pennsylvania cracker. I'm only telling what she is. That's what she was. And Bill is a-- well, what's that little town there in the state he comes from. He's a real cracker. The Clintons was bad for this country. They were real bad. And they don't know when to leave. Well, they should have left a long time ago. Because they was supposed to be the real politicians. You see, that thing has to go away for the young people can step forward.

And see young people haven't been stepping forward because the older Hillary and her friends, the black women, and some black men, got hooked up with Hillary and Bill. And when she come back and said, "Well, I need all of my friends." Well, the older black people went and voted for them. Went in deep forever. We got to have Hillary so she can be the first female president, because somebody told her when she was six years old she would be a good president. And she carried that all her life. And the lies, the lies, the lies, the lies. This country was built on a lie and it's going to pass on a lie. It's passing with Donald Trump. Have you ever heard of the United States, the Congress, the politicians, they always had cabinets and hundreds of people working for them. You know who runs this country now? Trump and his children. And a few lobbyists. They run the country. So that means democracy is over and done with. It really is over and done with. Because what happened yesterday in that thing down in Washington [shooting at ballpark], that is truly pitiful. But you see who's turning. It is not the real underclass, I mean the true underclass, it is the people that's tired of this. They are absolutely tired of it.

PF: Yeah, it was interesting that it was the person who did it.

MP: That's right.

PF: That makes it very interesting.

MP: The person who did it was one of the regular--he was a permanent underclass. He didn't have plenty of money and he was never going to have plenty of money. But then he couldn't get anything else. And that's what all that shooting is about. And there's probably another million of them feel the same way.

PF: But he's the one who finally got it.

MP: Well, you see--

PF: I mean, that it's not working.

MP: He is--he did it as other people with the same idea. But the first thing that the newspaper, "Well, he must be insane." Well, maybe so, but I don't think so. He ain't insane. What has happened to this country is, you almost can't put it back together, you know, Jack fell off the wall and fell into a thousand pieces. And it would be hard to put this thing back together. And some of these people still think it's a joke. Well, it's not a joke. Now, I'm not trying to convince anybody. I just know what the truth is, that's all. And that is the whole truth. Didn't nobody come from--none of them Arabs come and do that, none of the black folks did that, nobody did that but--I think he was--I don't know. What is his name?

PF: The fellow that did it? Hodgkinson?

MP: Hodgkinson. Yeah, that's an English or German name, one of them two.

PF: Well, that's a good breaking point here. Let's get back to Asheville here. But I believe we can do that all day.

MP: That needs to be on the record.

PF: Sure.

MP: That needs to be where people can hear it, because--

PF: Yeah, it is history.

MP: Yeah. All right.

PF: I mean, today people are going "Yeah, well, maybe." But then pretty soon they're going to look back in a few years and say "Oh, well, that's true." That's our history now.

MP: Well, you see, history don't go nowhere, it really don't go nowhere. And the thing is--yeah, we can drop this for now. Ain't nothing going to change.

[Laughter.]

PF: Now what should I get on now?

KP: Growing up.

MP: Oh, growing up.

PF: Yeah, we like all that in here. Now did most of your siblings stay in the area? How many stayed in the area?

MP: There was two.

PF: Just two out of all that.

MP: Out of all of them, two stayed here. And I'm glad they did because my mother father, we didn't have to come down here and get them and take them away to, you know, where we was living. And they still live here and I'm glad they did stay. But then it's just much different between them and me and the rest of them, the ones that passed on. I stand here, it kind of, you know, kept them in the place in their mind, they can't do this and can't do that, folks want this and folks want that. And when I come back here, when we come back here, the old saying in the black community is that they won't let you do

that. Well, I heard that so much, I said, "Well, go get 'they' and bring him in and tell me what I can't do." So they couldn't find no they that was willing to come and tell us what we couldn't do. Because I can do anything I want to do. I don't break the law because it's a consequences to that, but then laws are everywhere. But I'm saying as far as the way blacks have been maybe trained to think is that you have to ask white folks to do, what you can do or ask them can you do it. Once you go north and east and west and south and all them other places, you don't ask nobody nothing. You know what to do. And always have since we've been back here. We've been real successful there and here. Moreso and people say "you must have somebody front for you." I don't need no front man. I'm not needing a front man. And they didn't, for a long time they didn't--they couldn't get to it, because my mama, Lillian, told her children "Can't nobody stop you but you. Don't believe what people tell you." And I have to put this in. Well, first let me tell you who my mama is. My mama was a cracker, too, really. Yeah, she was here.

PF: Well, you need to define cracker for me. I've heard the phrase but it's not part of my vocabulary or knowledge, really.

MP: All right, I can define that real easy. It was a--she was a mixture, but she was called--what is that term they call--mulatto.

KP: Yeah.

MP: And my granddaddy, on my mama's side, a lot of white folks is involved. I mean, they was a part of the group. But as far as being a cracker, take them that come out of Madison County. Take those that run around with that flag. Those that think that they, that Jesus died and left them in charge of the world.

PF: And that's the way I have always thought of cracker. But then when you say your mother was a cracker--

MP: Well, what I'm saying is, she was a mulatto, meaning that her daddy was a white boy.

PF: Oh.

KP: The Landrums of Landrum, South Carolina.

MP: You know when you go down south, you go down 26 and you see that sign over there, Landrum, well, that's who they were. I don't talk about that too much because I know what happened to them. But let me keep going now. She was a big talker and I got--I took that after her, talk all the time basically. We're the one that talk all the time. But the thing is--

PF: [Laughing] Like it's a gene.

MP: Well, she always would say, "You can do anything you want to do. Nobody can stop you. And if you got to break the law, make sure you don't get caught, because you didn't make the law and sometimes laws were made against you and you have to go around them or go over them, but you can't let that stop your life." All right? How good looking I was, that's what she said to her children. "Don't let nobody tell you you're ugly, because you're the best looking children I ever seen." Well, you see, if your mama tell you that all the time, who can tell you that you're not? I mean, they can tell you all day. And she said, "You don't trust white people. Don't believe nothing they say. Don't trust them." And she was right. Because they will lie to you. And Trump is the biggest example of that on the

planet. He is a habitual liar. And therefore, we made out pretty good, because, you see-- Oh. One more thing in there. It was like, she said, "The only difference between my children and the Rockefeller children", because I guess that's the only rich person she heard the name of, "is that they got more money than we got. That's the only difference."

PF: What my son calls the luck of the sperm.

[Laughter.]

MP: No, it was not the luck of the sperm, it was the criminality that they did to make themselves, get themselves in those positions. Because they went around the world killing everybody and taking everything they could take. Well, you see, my grandmama would say, "Well, you know", snuff, she used to dip snuff and it would run down, "sooner or later what goes around come around." And I've lived long enough to see it start to come around. It's coming around. And ain't no stopping it. The other day, I have to say this, there was an article that I read about the Chinese. They're pretty much in charge of the world now.

PF: And if Trump makes everybody else mad, they will be.

MP: Well, you see, the way he acted and talked about them, is that now they are pretty much-- All the things that they did, that I read about, they got the bullet trains, they made a deal with Africa. They have now put trains all lover China. They have built 10 or 15 new airports. They built all kind of hotels. They made an agreement with Africa because they needed some of the stuff that they--well, that Africa had in the ground, that they didn't have. Well, the Africans made a deal with them. And if you notice, well we

noticed, that Africans don't come to America no more, they go to China. Well, one of--I have to get this in.

PF: Okay.

MP: One of the greatest lies, and they still tell it all the time, is that there is seven continents on the planet. Well, there ain't never been no seven. It's only three. That is Asia, Africa and the American continent. And that's it. There's some islands that's big. But a continent is something altogether different. It rides on the tectonic plates and there's only three of them. So this European went across the world, put some maps out there, told lies about that and now he's got most of the people on the planet confused because the folks that was here when he got here. They ain't Indians, they're Asians. They're Asians, man. Always have been. They look like it. Go to Asia. On that continent you can tell the people who is Asian. You know. I'm saying when you go Africa, you can tell an African from everybody else. And I'm saying the lies that they were allowed to get away with, the truth is now popping up everywhere and they can't stamp it, they can't tap none of them down. Because truth forever on the scaffold and a lie forever on the throne. It is the scaffold that weighs the future and the future of the world is the scaffold and they're coming back, everybody is back now. Now I don't want to scare white folks, because I got some--well, no such thing as one drop of blood and all that. But I don't want to scare them. But their time is over with. It's over with. Everything is over with but the shouting because what went around is now coming around. I am an African. My daddy's people was truly African, wasn't no mixture in there. But my mama's, so I'm almost like Obama. But then I'm a human and I don't hate nobody. I don't do that. I had to practice on that for a long time, but I've got so I ain't got no hard feelings and all that. And when I see a

person like Trump coming in and stirring everything up, he has did more damage to this country than can be fixed. And the thing is, I'm going to say this and then I think I'll just get on to something else. And it need to be said, that everybody on the planet is the children of Africans. See, everybody, everybody. Now whoever wrote all them little jack-leg scientists, things that they started in America and all across Europe, all that was a lie. And the truth is out now. But everybody, is only one family, and that's the human family. Only one. And it's only three continents. And the thing about the lies, the lies, the lies that have been told, well, they're falling off fast. Real fast. And Trump speeded it up. Now, these are my own--that is a natural fact. My feeling and what I know and what I will follow is this: all the white folks that call themselves, I think they call themselves mankind, they Africans. They're Africans. They are the children of Africa. Like the Asians, like all the other people, they're Africans. And you see, the rest of the world know that, except in America. And they've been too busy trying to--and Europe--they've been too busy doing other things and lying about everything. Now, I know that you're my sister. See, I know that. No matter what you think or what you been told, you're my sister. And I will always treat you that way. Because I know the lies that's been told. The brain has been reworked and every 300 years--I have to put this in--nature usually resurrects the brain. And it's been a good 300 years since we were brought here and put into slavery, because slaves don't come from Africa. Africans come from Africa, and slaves are made in the United States and in Austria and in all other little places they went around to. So the thing is, when the lie is straightened out, then there'll be some peace on this plant, because before that there was peace on this planet. People got along, people really got along. But then when my great-great-great-great-great-great-great grandparents took

some of their children to Asia, and when the grandparents died out, they just didn't have a complete stream going. They had to get their children in a cooler climate because they would die about 24 or 25 of skin cancer. So living in Africa was not a good place for them to stay. And my grandparents, my great way-back 10, 30 centuries ago, no more than that--of course, you all have been with us ever since everybody else. And it's no difference, it's just that somebody got a chance to lie about it and then put it in the books. The only difference between you and I sitting here, if we take a DNA test, is that it is the melanin in the pineal gland. It is the magic chemical that we have more of than you. It's the only difference between us. And the pineal gland produces that. It is the gland that sets your clock. It is the gland that--well, the ancients called it the magic chemical. And one of the reasons that my 15,000-generation grandma took her children to Asia--it wasn't Asia then, Panjere was the place, is that they could live longer. And that's who our brothers and sisters turned out to be, that's who they turned out to be. And I know that people don't talk about it--no, people talk about it. Folks know about it. I knew about it and I know it to be the truth. And when I learned that, I took off all that dislike and that hate and I balled it up and threw it in the corner. I don't hate you.

PF: And see, that's all easy for me to feel because I am a real mixture anyway. I'm a Heinz 57 varieties. I don't have a pure whatever. And I don't go back very far in my knowledge of my thing. It's kind of untrackable. Therefore, I don't have anything in this, dog in the fight, as far as--

MP: No, no. But you must remember that it's only one race. And we've been having contact with each other ever since we been here. And it's been three billion years. So I'm saying, like, we're still the same people and everything's the same. And we learned other

things but then there was a reason that the minority of the world-- See, it's always the ones that my great-great-great-great-great grandparents took to Africa--I mean, they took them to Asia to a cooler climate, is that they was a minority in Africa, and they couldn't live there. And it has been a minority ever since. Because you see there's about, there's a billion 300 million Chinese. They're our cousins and brothers and sisters. All the people, the so-called Arabs, they're Asians. Just look at them and look at that Cherokee. He's the same person. Ain't no difference. And the thing about what my white--I'm going to call them white but they're not really white, but that's what they say but they're not--is to embrace them and tell the truth. And that's what I do. Sometime I get a little mad when they do stupid stuff. But then I don't take that to heart.

PF: Well, let's get back to South Slope and how you--when did you first realize what was happening there, that all this was going to be taken away? When did you first find that out?

MP: Oh, with the red-lining?

PF: Yes, and the urban removal.

MP: Well, my sisters and brothers, they called and said, you know, "These people getting ready to push the house down." Well, me and my brothers and sisters, we got in the car and got right down here. And when we got here, we understood what was going on. Because the same things was going on in New York, on Long Island, and in Jersey, it was the same thing. And see I was on the council of the urban renewal thing in Patterson, New Jersey. And I understood what was going on. But in the city like that, where we was at, we was kind of in charge. And it didn't go down like it went down here in Asheville.

So we come down, well, me and my brothers and no sisters, we just come down. And we straightened it out to a point, where they took the property but then we had to get my parents another house right then to live in. And we did. And they live in the same house right now. They live over here in Montford.

PF: Your parents?

MP: Well, they passed, my father passed and--they would be 100--they were born in 18 something, 1898 and 1899. But my father passed before the Fagg Street thing, you know, before--he passed in '73. Yeah. And it was just my mother, my sister and my brother.

PF: Well, when did they actually push the houses down, when did they actually do that? I thought it was in the sixties.

MP: It was in the sixties. It was in the sixties. But see, my father passed before that and when they come in and pushed them down they didn't give a lot of them old people time enough to get some of their stuff out of the houses. And I don't make a joke out of it, but over here where that brewery is across the bridge, the big brewery over there, that's where they took all the stuff from Southside and put it in the landfill over there. And the old people died out, with broken hearts. All the houses was not bad. They was not bad. But, the city fathers decided, and the state people of North Carolina, they decided that--one of the statements they made was real bad. They were out and they put them in some public housing and all. They had to move some to other neighborhoods and the come back and said, "Well, we moved them out and we hope they perish."

PF: Oh, my gosh.

MP: And it's in the records.

PF: Where on the records? I mean, what kind of records? Like council meetings or newspapers or--

MP: Uh-huh.

PF: My gosh.

MP: So with that, it was not good. And then the old people, they didn't really understand what was happening to them. It was urban removal and eminent domain. Now you tell an old person 80 years old imminent domain and not going to take your property, that would be like something you might get shot about. But they didn't understand that, what the government was involved in. And the government is kind of the real reason that we're so far apart. They really are. And the local governments and all that, but it was about them making money, and they made money. And now they're dead, they have left it to their grandchildren and all the stuff that they did is coming back, because blacks usually, the young people, don't know what happens to their grandparents and what happened to the property and what happened to the things they owned. They don't know that. They just know that we don't own nothing and we ain't got no business, you know. My granddaddy had this, what happened to it. I mean, they tore it down. And they did that in big cities, they did it in Pittsburgh, they did it in other cities, and then they put highways. You know how the highways cut through the cities, and that 40 and that other one over there.

PF: And there again, it was for our own good because it was supposed to be--it was sold at that time as a mass like--

KP: Transportation.

PF: Yeah, but more than just transportation. The highway system had some kind of thing, kind of like the terrorism now. It was a way to evacuate and so on, should the need be. Okay. If the highway goes here to here and here to here, where do you evacuate to? At that point, if everybody is evacuating nationwide--

MP: Well, you see, the story was, when the Japanese kind of landed in California and Eisenhower was the guy that running it--no, the other guy--Eisenhower was running that. And Eisenhower come back and said, "We have to have a way to get our army to the west coast, east coast, north and south. And that's why the highway built those things, but then the easiest way to put in the highways was to come in and cut through the black communities. Now, they got a highway route 40 cut right up on Shiloh. And that broke that community.

PF: And they're still fighting that, you know, trying to retain what they do have.

MP: Well, they cannot retain it because the old people died and now we're in a re-gentrification?

KP: Gentrification.

MP: And see, the young people don't understand what that mean. They just say, "Well, people don't really got no other place to move." And I don't know if the young people understand it, but they're doing another urban renewal, removal. That's what they're doing. They're doing the same thing right now. And our community, on both sides, up the street, down the street, places where they would never live. And they left to live and tear

down old houses, build new houses, and young people sell the property. They don't sell it, they give it away, really. And now in Shiloh, they come in and drew a line, again they separated it into two places. Sweeten Creek Road, one Shiloh is on this side, the other Shiloh is on that side, but it's not really that because it was never Shiloh. Where we lived at it's called Petersburg. But somebody told the young people Shiloh was over there, but that isn't Shiloh. I mean, it was never Shiloh. And I have to tell these young people, "That's not Shiloh. It's Petersburg." And they reason they called it Petersburg is because the people that worked over there, they caught the bus, but bus come off but they finally stopped that because all the old people that caught the buses that went all through the city, maids, cooks and all that. And just up the street from where we live at was a slave camp. Right at the Busbee Mountain, at the foot of the mountain. And I'm saying like the young people don't know that. And nobody never taught them.

PF: A slave camp did you say or cabin? Slave camp?

MP: It was a--I'm going to call it a slave camp, because I seen a map, and that's where they lived, at the foot of Busbee Mountain. And Busbee Mountain is there behind my house.

KP: I would say it's a community.

MP: Oh, you know, that community is still there, it's still there. And I don't think the young people or old people died and they didn't tell them that this is Petersburg, not Shiloh. Because I don't have to wonder where the name Shiloh come up, that's a Jewish name. What is it the name--no, the famous Christian, so they might have named it that and not understand it. And you see, I've got a hell of a story to tell, and it's all true. I got

the records to back it up, too. Because sooner or later, in order to bring the groups back together, we didn't separate in the first place, and poor whites, they didn't separate from us. It was the government and the city officials. And now them rascals is dead and gone. And now they's trying to do it again. And that's not good. So I'm going to tell all the young people I know, black and white, this is what it really is.

PF: I see it all, though, as starting at the top. It started at the federal government, and the city and the state, when they were offered all this money, that's all they thought.

MP: That's right.

PF: They didn't see how it affected lives. I believe they just saw "This is how much money we have to spend, look at all the jobs it will create, blah, blah, blah." And so they did it without any forethought as to what this meant down the road.

MP: What it meant is what is going now. And it was such a tragedy, Trump to become the president. But what kicked all that up was Obama. The world was glad to see him. The world. He was thought of more across the world than he was in the United States. The world leaders, they wanted to see him so bad they was like, acted like little children. "Well, damn, the Americans finally got some sense over there." But then what Mitch McConnell and that House of Representatives, the senate and the representatives, what they did, was--no one expected that. And now look what we have. American didn't grow up yet. Or maybe it's overgrown. And you know, I got another statement I make to young people. That they call them millenniums, but there's a difference between the black ones and the white ones. I put them at the top, because I know all the stuff happened behind. It was bad. But now I haven't changed my mind, but I talk with the white children about

this and I say plainly "You live in a different era than your mama, daddy and your granddaddy. But the way I hear you talking, you talking just like your granddaddy talking. And that's not good." Because I have faith in the young people. The old people like me, I can't do but so much but talk and the thing about that is, all this goes on between the races now, it was that bad when I was a kid, and I thought we had kind of gotten around that, but we haven't gotten around it. And this is the last go-around, this is it. I will make this statement, and I don't say that too much, my family has lived here so long till I say this is my country, and I mean that's what it is. But then the laws and the, all the things that happened to us, it's very hard. But you see, if you was born and raised here, we've been here, I don't know, almost 200 years. And that's a long time to be here. But then they was here before then. But we almost ain't no part of it and we're not, really. And that's not a good feeling. The black millenniums, we were civil rights workers. I was with Martin Luther King, she was with somebody else. But we tried. We had been trying to be a part of this country ever since we've been here, but we've been stopped, promised and lied to. Well, what I've got to say to the white folks that really ain't white, no such thing as a white person, is that you have to maybe--I don't know if they can do better at this point. But black children are different now. They don't understand that what they have did is that they have lost faith in what we talk about and what we do because they say, "Oh, that's old-fashioned." And then, out of the respect they have, they don't say too much more. And sometime they'll tell me, "Well, it didn't work for you. Why is it going to work for me?" And then I ain't got no comeback on that because it didn't work. And it won't never work. It was not designed to work. And they're saying to me that they're not going to put up with that, and they're not. We got to point, when I was young, that we

couldn't put up with it either. But my grandchildren, not my children, my grandchildren, they won't put up with that. They ain't going to put up with that. They're not going to put up with being pushed around, told what to do and all this stuff. They're not going to put up with that. And they have their allies. The have the LBH--whatever that group of people is that went through the same thing that we been going through, the LGB group.

KP: LGBTQ.

MP: Yeah, whatever the hell it is. They have now joined with them. And when they joined with them, The Democratic Party got a real problem. They can't win without us and the young millenniums showed it to them. They told them, "Well, you better come over there and vote." So we ain't doing that, because you see it's only one party, and that's the white supremacy party, and that's all it is. So the lie and the lies that have been told all this time, it stops with the new children. See, that ain't going to work no more. And the old people, like me out here running around trying to help get Dump--damn, I called him Dump--Trump--[Laughter] trying to get him out, with his yellow hair.

PF: With his what?

MP: With his yellow hair. See, he's an albino. No, don't shrug your shoulders, that's what he is. They have yellow hair. I know some Africans with yellow hair. We got--have us all different colors. Well, now, when you did your shoulders--

PF: I was thinking of his yellow hair. I call it orange.

MP: Well, it's orange, yellow, whatever, but it's not a natural color for hair to be. So he's the big albino. That's what he is. And that's like a part of that thing that--well, the young

people. I'll go back to young people. They're not going to do that any longer. So the lie is not over with the politicians. The white children don't believe in them and the black children don't believe in them and they are the next generation to take over and they're saying to hell with all of that. And I know it's time for that. All the people that died, all the marching we did with King and all that non [ ] stuff, and they got the right to vote. They got a constitution and in that constitution I have a right to vote, I'm a citizen, I was born here. But then the government say, "Well, we're independent states and we can stop you from voting." And the government then go out with the National Guard and kick asses and break heads, because sometime you have to do that. They say, "You got to go to court." Well, the Supreme Court, that's a joke. And the young people know that's a joke. So they say it ain't got nothing to do with them no more. Not being able to vote you're not a citizen. You can't do anything either. No, you're a citizen when it come down to going to war. You're a citizen when it come down to paying taxes. You're a citizen when it come down too--whatever the hell you do. But you don't get--you're not a citizen when it come down to your tax money going into housing, you're not a citizen when you go into the court. You're treated like a alien. And the young blacks and whites ain't going to take that. So that means that's pretty much--Trump is doing one thing to end America. Because he's pretty much done ended it. And now the young people are saying to hell with it. They ain't doing that either. So that means the country's going. And I'm glad I'm 80-something years old.

PF: What do you think the next --their step is then? Will they make it better? Will we think it's better?

MP: No, it ain't going to get better. I don't want it to get to revolution, but-- Did you ever read anything about the French revolution?

PF: Yeah. A little. I mean, I'm not a student of it but I know of it.

MP: I'm not going to say that I'm a student of it either. But they put the brakes on all the foolishness. They took all the politicians and all of the landowners, set that guillotine down there where the Eiffel Tower is on this land, I don't know where the hell they put it in there, but they had them up and they cut heads off and took blood, you were walking in blood knee deep.

PF: It got their attention.

MP: That got the attention. And that's what I think--I know that it gets your attention. The French people, the politicians are actually scared of the people and they do what the people want them to do. In America the politicians ain't scared of nobody because they've got safe districts. "Well, you can't get me out of here." Anyone would have told me the other day, Democrats--they didn't tell me. We was talking and he said, I know he was ignorant, but he was trying to be smart. He said I was sort of like the Democrats and how bad they are. He said, "Well, you have no alternative." Now that's arrogant. That is a person who drank the Kool-Ade and believe the lies that they was told.

PF: Arrogant and ignorant.

MP: And ignorant. Really ignorant. And I'm saying do you understand who you're talking to, boy, I'm your daddy, fool. Do you understand that? And I don't know more than you do about everything. Because I know who you come from. You come from me. But if

you was told a lie for a long period of time, well, you would be just like me. I believe what my mama told me. And their mamas told me the same thing, whatever believed, they was told it by their mama. Because children believe what their mama tell them. I know I believe what my mama told me. And it worked out fine for me. At least she told me the truth about all kind of things, whatever it was going on. But what she knew herself and the experiences. So life for me ain't been real bad.

PF: Now, do you have children?

MP: Yeah, I got, how many? Ten of them or nine, I don't know.

PF: Okay.

MP: All the grandchildren, I mean, I got great-grandchildren, I got, you know, huge. My brother had, what, how many he had? All us, we had big, big ones. I come from a big family and I always liked children, so now we've got them. Now my parents, when they was in South Carolina, and the grandparents, they had them because when they got old, somebody was there to take care of them. And that was a pretty good system because the grandparents was around them. And see, one of the worst things that we as a group were put under is that the parent, the mother, for the family to survive, the mother have to work. My mother never worked a day in her life. And with all the children, my daddy was the only one that worked. My grandmother didn't, they was home. And what that did for children, you can pretty much raise them the way you want to raise them. But somebody come up with this bright idea, well, it cost so much money. It used to be you could take care of your family with $25 a week. Now it costs $10,000, because

everything is so high. So the mother have to go and put the children in a daycare center. That's like [ ] them.

PF: Yeah, because the daycares are so expensive.

MP: You work just to pay them. I don't understand why--come on, people-- And then some people got all the money and they intend to keep it. Not in America you should be able to do that. But it's coming to a head real fast. I don't know if that's all you want to do, talk about, but everything leads into politics, and then it leads into religion and I know a hell of a lot about all that, but that ain't necessary to go saying, I guess. But it's just that that's how I feel. That's what I know and that's what I know that's going to happen and there ain't nothing and no way we can stop it unless they come up with, you know, them guys decide that they're going to leave Washington and go get some young people and bring them in there and turn it over to them and then they can start that they can fix it.

PF: Well, someone said recently that the "old style politicians" who did go in there and, you know, supposedly do the love for country and all that, that now the whole idea is just to get in, get the benefits forever, get out in four or six years and become a lobbyist and make the big money.

MP: That's right. That's right. And make the real money.

PF: And so that's their foot in the door.

MP: That's right. And that should be against the law. You can't be no lobbyist, you can't go out there and work with them people if you just left here.

PF: Right. Like it is in certain branches of the military, you know. At certain levels you can't do this and that, supposedly.

MP: Right. It's the good old boy system. It was designed to do what it's doing. And the only way to stop it is--well, this is going to be, yeah, it is the truth, this is my opinion. Is to go get the constitution, take them down to the whatever, take all them documents and all the lies off the wall. Take those statues in statue hall and melt them back down, because all that was a lie, too. And have a constitution convention with everybody that live in this country that have a stake in this country. And everybody have something to say. That's the only way it's ever going to straighten out. But that ain't going to happen.

PF: I'd hate to be in charge of that meeting.

MP: Well, you see, that's something that folks shouldn't say, to be in charge of the meeting.

PF: I mean to get it all together, all that.

MP: To be in charge or to get all together, if they had a constitutional convention and burn that other one up, because that's what needs to happen here. It ain't good for nothing. It ain't no good in document. Those guys that wrote it was a bunch of liars and criminals and crooks. So you need to take and throw that stuff away because it don't work in the 21st century. And the rest of the world has stepped around America. America ain't what it used to be. We fight everybody's war and we pay the money and the poor people ain't got nothing and they paid all the damn money. Well, after a while the people get tired of that. One more thing that the young people say. You can start a war if you want to and then

they's family is going to have to go because they ain't going. So what does that say about it? They ain't going to bother with that no more. Because it was always an excuse, "Well, you know, we this and we that." The lie have to stop. Have a constitutional convention, everybody to the table, and if you don't show up it's on you, but we going to change this country. We going to change it and make it what it can be, because for China to be the leader in the world now, they had those wars over there with China and a few of them, they ain't all that friendly. Not to Americans. And anybody that get a real chance will take advantage of this country. They will take it if they can. And that's where that Putin things is coming in right now. It has now weakened the country. Them other little countries are starting jumping on you now. Like the boy in Korea, another Donald Trump, insane. So I'm saying I'm not quitting living there. I'm a part of it, I come out of this earth and I'll go back in it, here. So I don't know. I know you didn't think that you was going to hear all this.

PF: I guess there's only so much you can say about Asheville. We have to branch out.

MP: The thing is, we had a normal growing up. I mean, my mother was home and things was right. And she was a real protector. And it was so many of us, we was a clan.

PF: [Chair squeaking.] That squeaking's going to be louder than your voice on here, that chair.

MP: But with the, it was a clan and people are still clannish the same way. They were people lived on the mountain, on the top of the mountain, on the other side of the mountain. Well, it was that you didn't start something with them and if you did the grown people would come in and straighten it out.

PF: You mean among the young people at that time.

MP: Yeah, among the young people. Just like all the different communities that we lived in but all of us went to the same school so we knew each other. Everybody--everybody, but people knew each other. Well, if you went to their community, there was some little guys in there, well, they got a game but they know if they do something to one of them other ones, well it's going to create a real problem. So the grown people kept a lid on that. And we did get along. Because sometimes black people can get along with each other and all of us ain't the same.

PF: Now did you have--I know there was a distance, a physical distance, and not everybody had cars and everything, so that probably limited it, but did you have like visiting with other black communities? How much did you see them? I know they weren't real close in distance.

MP: And we went to school together.

PF: You did go to school together.

MP: There was only one black school, over here on a back street. And the thing is, they had cars.

PF: Well, I know there were some cars but I mean in general it wasn't like now. Kids have cars at 16.

MP: Well, it wasn't 1800s, they didn't have many cars. Everybody had to walk. And they had streetcars around here. But he was young, he got a car. We always had a car. We always had a car. Well, the thing about the car was that there was maybe two or three cars

in the community and one telephone that we had, I'd say. We didn't have a telephone. But the lady just up the road had a telephone. Sullivan, Rosalie Sullivan. How would I remember that name? They had a telephone. And if anything happened that you had to call somebody, the kids would run up there and tell her and she would call. My daddy would haul the people around if they had to do something. It was him--let's see. It was two people that had a car. The Gibsons had a car and we had a car. And anything happened there, they'd get up and take the children where they had to go somewhere, or they had to go to church or somebody got sick and they had to go to the hospital, they would take the car, get up any time they wanted them to do it. So we--they stuck together and they protected the community. And other people in the community did the same thing. And they would come together on the church grounds. Now there was churches all around. But we went to the same school. Every place we were there for each other. So it was not--this was not a hard place to live.

PF: Now, one thing that surprised me, and I didn't see it when we were talking at South Slope that day, but that piece, in this group that they used there for the handout, the dark one, it showed a street of businesses and I was just overwhelmed when I saw how many there were. I mean, you think a store and something else. I couldn't believe that whole thing.

KP: A district.

PF: Yes, a district.

MP: That's right. The hotel there, the James Keys Hotel. That hotel was four stories high. I mean, it was like--

PF: Tell me more about the businesses in that area.

MP: Oh, the vendors in the area, they was all the stores. The shoe shops, it was the hotels, it was the stores, the candy stores. It was the drugstores, all of that was in the community.

KP: Jewelry stores.

PF: What?

KP: I said, the jewelry stores.

MP: Yeah, the jewelry store. They had jewelry stores. You know, we had everything that everybody else had. The only thing that, we couldn't use other people's stores. So our folks had their own stores.

PF: Now, integration did away with that, to some extent, probably, because people could go into other places where they didn't previously.

MP: Well, integration, when we was integrated it was when the whole community was integrated.

PF: Right. Yeah.

MP: And that mean it was blacks and whites. Now, the movie in the James Key Hotel, it was a movie in the hotel.

PF: You mean, they showed movies there?

MP: Yeah. It was just like the other movies, just like, you know. And there was one here on Eagle Street, the same thing. There was two movies, that were owned and ran by black

people. I've seen all the old movies, the black cowboy movies, and these children say, "What cowboy movies"? Well, we had the same thing. Made in Hollywood. And it was not that we were shut out, you know, the war news and all that. They would put that on in the movie, World War II, you could see what they were doing, but they'd bring it to the movies. We didn't have any back times in the country. This is, Asheville is a city. I was born and raised in the city. There were public transportation. They had no school buses. The only people had school buses lived out in Hendersonville and over here at the mountain county. That's how they got to school, because there wasn't no high school out there. So we had, well, championship baseball teams, championship basketball team, because we had a big crop of people to pick from. You know. It was like a city as big as Charlotte. When you surround Asheville with all these outlying counties. And it's like people always lived out there, black people always lived everywhere. They lived all around, in the mountains. And these folks in Madison County, they have a reputation of being kind of mean, but I know black people that were born and raised out there with them, and they're kin to them. Two or three families. And they still live out there.

PF: I didn't even know that. I don't associate any of that with out there.

MP: Well, you see, when you get into Burnsville and Hendersonville, black people have always lived in these outlying counties. And they still live there. And they're still kin to people that live there, just like in Asheville. We're kin to folks. I had a, what was it, I don't know. Let me get this right. We had some cousins that lived over near--what's the name of that street [ ] is on?

KP: Carol.

MP: Yeah, Carol Street. Well, and it's right off of Valley Street. And the street is still there?

PF: Carol?

MP: Carol, yeah, it's off of Valley Street. Well, it wasn't too far from Fagg Street so we would walk over there. And there was a store down on the corner. And we would sometime go to the store and being a child and not really thinking that, well, they was white, they were just like you. They was more white than they were black. I think the daddy was--the mama was brown-skinned, but the daddy was white. Whatever it was. But they were actually white. And we would be walking the street, you know, going to come out of the store and be walking back and the white folks, they'd pull up and look at us. And I'm going what are they looking at? They never seen no people there before? But he wasn't looking at us, he was looking at those girls. And then they realized they must be kin. Well, we were. And, you know what, one of them is still living. Kania(?) told me that the other day, that property come down there by the church, that whole amount of property that they sold for $500,000. They've been living on that property for eons, their mama, daddy, all their brothers and sisters. Everybody died out except one or maybe two. Well, they went to school with us, you know, and when you walk to town, one of the kids that I was raised up with, Gibson, Sonny Gibson, well, he was really a white boy. But he didn't look at it that way.

KP: He had that one drop.

MP: Yeah.

KP: You know what that is.

PF: Yes. Yes, I do.

MP: All right. Well, he looks like his daddy's people. And I'm saying that he would be a mulatto in America, that's really what he was.

PF: Yes.

MP: And that's what my mother and my grandfolks was on that Landrum side. And it's in the census, and you read in the census "mulatto." Well, damn, what the hell is that? They're called mulattos. And in South Africa the same thing went down. But this person that sit on that throne and screwed it up, and I understand why they screwed it up. If you come to America and you are African or whatever you are, on your papers they put you down "black." And that is to keep the population up. Because if you run across this book that got Pat Buchanan fired from the radio station, it's called *The Death of the West*. All the statistics is in here. The boy wrote a book and it wasn't for black people to read, it was for white people. It was called *The Death of the West*, and he wrote two of them.

PF: *The Death of the West*.

MP: *The Death of the West*. If you read that, it will tell you all the things that you didn't know in history, they got it there. With research. And when he was on one of--on CNN show and one day he start talking about it and we ain't seen Pat Buchanan since. They took him off because they said, "This isn't something that you can say." Well, they told him, they could buy your book but you can't come here and start talking about that book

on the television. Because it unraveled how bad a shape the Caucasians are in, in America and everywhere else.

[Break.]

PF: What church did you go to as a child?

MP: Bethel Baptist Church on South French Broad, and it's still there. My daddy would drive us over to the church and everybody would pile up in the car and get out. Well, I could walk in but I never walked out because they had to drag me out because I was sleeping. I never learned anything about Jesus. All I know is the name. I was never a Christian. But they thought I knew, but I never knew anything about all that. And I did get a good excuse, "Well, don't get politics with religion." Anybody start talking about religion, I would say, "Well, I ain't going to mix politics with religion." I ain't never knew nothing about religion. What I learned about religion I was around, when I got away from here. I was around the barbershop. Now people thinks the barbershop, they find out exactly what the barbershop is about now, in the black community and all of that. Well, I got me a PhD in the barbershop. Everybody, the well learned, the ones that didn't know nothing and the ones were sinners, the ones was everything, they come and got a haircut. And they was always talking. When I picked up the Bible and started reading it, I know that was a joke. It's something that should never have been forced on us, or anybody. Because it's nothing but a lot of lies. That is the imminent lie and it was to control people. The Africans had their own religion, they did everything, they had their own culture and it was a beautiful culture. But the ones that got here and got trapped on this side, they either learned how to do that or they got their heads beat, I guess. I don't know. And that's

one of the major problems that we--that black people have in America, is that we believe the Jesus story. Well, you know where the Jesus story come from? The big pyramid on the Giza Plateau, and it's called the Pyramid Text. That's where the Jews got it from, and it's written in the hieroglyphics, and now they could read hieroglyphics and I can read it, too. So the thing is, they passed Americans, the whites, the English, whoever, they passed it all around the world, the Catholics. They passed it around the world. Well, and the Jews is the only one that don't believe it. They don't practice any kind of religion. They practice a philosophy. And the thing is, we accepted it after generations after generation after generation. It's like catching a fish on a hook. The hook went in us, hook, line and sinker. The sinker's what hold the thing above the water, and we got it here and we can't get it out. So in order to get that thing out of us, it has to die out of us, and don't you know the young people has put that down now, that crowd I'm talking about. They don't believe that. So I'm saying I don't know, well, see, you're privileged to hear this, because black folks don't talk this way to other people. I do. And for this conversation, a lot of black folks assume that you all know and understand. I know that for the people who invented it, it was not for the lower class. It was for they obey it and they did for a while. But the people who really did us damage was that Christian thing. And these preachers get on every Sunday and do the same thing and I see black folks sitting and listening. Boy, that's what put you in slavery and that will keep you there. Because that'll own your mind. And you see, like I used to be kind of embarrassed when people was talking about all that and everybody know I talked all the time, but I'd get quiet, because I didn't know, well, I didn't know anything much about that myself, until I went and got the Koran, the King James Bible, and that Muslim guy, Mohammad's Bible. I went to Harlem, 125th

Street to that bookstore and I bought them Bibles. "What you going to do with this?" I say, "I met a friend of mine" I was ashamed to tell them I was going to read on it and I read all the Bibles and I understand it. And you see, there was only one so-called religion that these other people took out. It was the Catholics. A Muslim ain't nothing but a Catholic. That's all he is. He just don't understand. And now they fight and kill each other about it. And believe it more than anybody else. And that was to do a disservice to the Europeans, because the Europeans, I don't think they believe that either. They use it for something else. And they went around the world and enslaved all these people. And then we read the same Bible and all that, and they say, "Well, you ain't supposed to do that." That's why I don't mind saying these things to other groups of people. Now I don't know if you know that or not, but you heard it. And I don't think white people's that damn dumb that they don't know that. Now some of them is. But they found something that they can believe in and then Trump turned around and uses it on them, and that's the permanent underclass. He just keeps using it. And now with those people getting killed in Washington, shot up or something. Just like, "Well, we have to go pray." That boy don't believe in Jesus no more than I do. He just uses it. He uses it for his benefit. Now black folks don't tell you that. Black folks don't talk to white folks about religion. They don't do that. I mean some of them will, but I know I do, because everybody, if you don't know the truth, you need to hear the truth and then you will be able to get along with each other I think, but I don't know. But I've got my education from the barbershop, the real education, the real truth. That's where I got mine from, see, I got a PhD. I don't know who coined that phrase, but whatever they said, that's the highest thing what I got that. I'm telling you. I ain't trying to brag--yeah, I'm going to brag about it. Because I understand

what people are saying, I know what they're saying, I know how they feel and I know what they think. And I ain't in that hope thing. One time a chunky told me, "Boy, you believe all that. You believe that help." He said, "If you going to believe in Jesus, why don't you go get you a bag of crack, because that's the same thing. You're trying to overcome something that ain't real." And usually when the chunkies get the first whiff of it, when they first try it, they said you get that high that you feel, that you ain't ever had before and that's why they keep taking it and making it stronger and stronger and stronger. Then they finally kill their damn selves. But he said religion is pretty much the same thing, it'll kill you after a while. And I've seen that over and over and over and over. People die from that. But the young generation's different. They are different. My children, don't bring that Jesus up in here. Don't do that. You let them do that, they went to them private Catholic schools and all that kind of crap. Told them people they come over here to learn and not the Pope. Don't you tell them nothing about the Pope and they ain't got to participate in that because I ain't paying for that. And the other thing, the public schools don't teach geography.

PF: I don't know what they teach, to tell you the truth. They don't teach civics, that's for sure.

MP: I made a concerted effort because I wasn't taught geography either, not in that school over there. I don't remember none of it in none of them schools. Because they didn't teach geography. When I got it--them guys in the barbershop would say, they'd be talking about things, and I didn't know what part of the world it was on but I was too embarrassed to ask. So one of my friends said, "Well, go get you some of them track chart maps about as big as that thing up there." He was a merchant--

KP: Marine.

MP: Merchant marine, I guess, I don't know. He was on the merchant ships. He didn't shoot nobody, he just rode on them. And he said, "First you got to learn the world. Got to know where everything is at and who is there and who was there before and how they done." So I went and bought me a globe. I think I still got the globe. Kids broke it one day. And I got the maps. And I put them on the wall, through the house. "Don't put them maps on the wall." They're my walls, I'll put them up everywhere I want to. And I taught my children geography because that's the only way they were going to learn it. And when they were going to school and they got in college and people were surprised, "Why do you know all of that?" "Well, my daddy taught me." "You're daddy's a pretty smart man." More than that. So why not teach it and not lie to the American children, because they need to know that in order to live on the planet with everybody else.

PF: I'm supposed to take your picture so don't move.

[Break for photo and form signing.]

PF: Now, you mentioned something about Beaver Lake Golf Club and the caddies.

MP: Beaver Lake for the caddies, on Monday it was open for the black caddies to play golf. And they played on Monday. And no whites showed up because it was closed for white people. And I have caddied out there, as a little kid. I used to go out there with my brothers and the older boys in the community that was old enough to caddy. And they caddied out there in the summertime when school was out. Yeah. And I've seen, I knew about the golfers, but I was a little kid. They were much bigger than me.

PF: Now you knew of Dendy--

MP: Yeah, yeah.

PF: --that was Cissy Dendy's father.

MP: Yeah, sure did.

PF: Did you know of any other professional golfers in the area or ones that did really well?

MP: No. See, I was 8 or 10 years old. I know they had professional golfers and they traveled all around. But we didn't do not traveling and I wasn't no big kid anyway. But then a friend of mine, James Wilson, caddied and he managed to continue to play golf around Asheville and he went to some of those tournaments and he got the books and I put them on my computer and made a copy of those three books. And the next time I come, I'll bring them, because it might be something different than what this has.

PF: Oh, absolutely. Oh, the library would like to see that. Yeah.

MP: And they had the club members, they had their own club, and they got the people's pictures in there and what they did and all of that. And I know it's going to come in handy because I collect stuff, I know it, you know. Wow. Dendy. See you was saying Denty or--

KP: Dendy.

MP: Yeah. Yeah. I got his pictures in there and everything. Yeah.

PF: Well, that's good, but almost everybody that lives out north they'll mention Beaver Lake Golf Club, you know, either as a caddy or as a player.

MP: They had the club. They had the grounds and the clubs to themselves on Mondays, that's what they did. In Asheville. Well, I never learned how to play golf because was like a game you had to carry a heavy bag, but then I was a kid. But a lot of my school friends, they learned how to play golf and they could play tennis around here real good.

PF: And was there, one time I went to a Preservation meeting that was over in Kenilworth and they were talking about a golf course being there at one time. Did you ever know of one at Kenilworth? I can't even imagine where they had it.

MP: No, it wasn't a golf course over there. They had that lake in Kenilworth. But it's not that much ground over there.

PF: Especially flat. And they had stables, like down where they, you know, that big tobacco barn antiques warehouse is. Down in that area was stables, also, that was part of Kenilworth.

MP: That's right. Yeah.

PF: So there might have been a golf course somewhere that was just, like an eight-hole.

MP: No, it wasn't like a real professional. Oh, they got a public golf course down there, just down that road. A big one. And that's probably the one they're talking about.

PF: Oh, it might have been, at that time. The Municipal Golf Course?

MP: Yeah, Municipal, and it's just further down the street. So that's the one they're talking about. And that would be in Kenilworth. Yeah, and it's still open.

PF: Yeah, and then the city or whoever took it over at some point.

MP: Well, the County runs it, it belongs to the County, the County golf club. And now blacks been playing there for a long time. I think they could always play there. I'm not sure.

KP: But the clubhouse burned and they wouldn't--

MP: Oh, yeah, they couldn't participate in this club.

KP: --reopen it because by that time integration had come.

PF: The one that was Kenilworth? Oh. Uh-huh, yeah.

KP: Which is the County. After, I guess it was Brown versus Board and the whole civil rights legislative era, then they just wouldn't open it again. And then lately they renovated and opened it.

MP: Well, the golf--oh, wait a minute. Let me get this right now. Damn. Gardenheit is his name, that's been in charge of that club for--

PF: What was his name?

MP: Billy Gardenheit. He was the pro or the master of that and he still runs it, don't he? He been running that every since he left Stephens Lee. That was the first job he had. He is the pro golfer out there, whatever they call it, I don't know a lot about golfing. But I know he been running that club for at least, how long has it been, 40 years.

PF: Oh, my gosh. That's right.

KP: And they've had national golfers come and play here.

MP: Yeah. But like I said, I wasn't interest in golf. I played baseball. No football. I don't want nobody to break me up. Basketball I had to wear them little shorts and I didn't want to do that.

[Laughter.]

PF: Picky, picky! Well, on that happy thought, with that visual, we'll end this.

[Laughter.]

END OF INTERVIEW.